Research Note

NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN
FOREST AND RANGE EXPERIMENT STATION

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LUMBER PRODUCTION GAINS IN THE NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

By

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Lumber production in 1946 was 1,227,326 M feet b.m. in the Northern Rocky Mountain Region. This was a gain of 12 percent over 1945. Of the three units in the region, North Idaho was first, cutting 630,012 M feet b.m.; Montana second, 415,421 M feet b.m.; and Northeast Washington third, 181,893 M feet b.m.

An outstanding trend during 1946 was the large increase in the number of active sawmills. In 1945 there were 444 active mills; in 1946, 708 - an increase of 59 percent! Some of these mills were idle in 1945 but by far the largest number represent additional sawmill capacity in the small mill classes. Most of these mills obtained their equipment from plants which had previously gone out of business, some migrated into the region from other areas, and a few purchased new equipment.

Number of active sawmills. % Increase 1945 - 1946 Percent	Number of Active Sawmills	Lumber production. % Increase 1945 - 1946 Percent
+ 60	Montana: 1945 = 253, 1946 = 405	+ 22
+ 59	North Idaho: 1945 = 131, 1946 = 208	+ 3
+ 58	Northeast Washington: 1945 = 60, 1946 = 95	+ 29
+ 59		+ 12

The increase in lumber production and in the number of active mills is accounted for by several factors. During 1946 the unprecedented demand for all species and kinds of lumber stimulated all mills to maximize their production. Although there were acute shortages of logging and milling equipment at the beginning of the year, more equipment gradually became available. Disputes between labor and management, which greatly curtailed production in 1945, did not hold down production in 1946. Weather was favorable. Labor became more plentiful. Elimination of price control measures the latter part of the year removed a restraining influence for high-cost producers.

Tables I and II attached give by states and the region detailed statistics on lumber, tie, lath, and shingle production for 1946. In addition, lumber production is shown by species and by mill classes. Data on which these tables are based were collected by the Northern Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station 1/ in cooperation with the Bureau of the Census. The figures given are preliminary; final results will be published by the Bureau of the Census.

1/ The following members of the Division of Forest Economics participated in the collection and compilation of the data: P. N. Holmes, A. B. Evanko, E. W. Smith, H. J. Pissot, and M. E. Metcalf.

NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

(Compiled by the Northern Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, Missoula, Montana, in cooperation with the Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce. The statistics presented in this summary are preliminary tabulations of complete returns. Final data will be issued by the Bureau of the Census.)

Classification 1/	Active mills	Western white pine	Ponderosa pine	Western larch	Douglas-fir	Grand fir	Western redcedar	Western hemlock	Engelmann spruce	Lodgepole pine	Cottonwood	Other 2/	Total cut	Sawed cross ties 3/	Lath	Shingles	Lumber on hand 12-31-45	Lumber on hand 12-31-46
	Number	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft. b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	M Pieces	Squares	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.
MONTANA																		
Class I-a	129	25	4,720	1,860	5,018	10	5	-	674	1,219	203	-	13,728	185	-	-	73	264
Class I-b	67	148	6,974	4,927	7,207	-	128	2	150	1,222	552	-	21,310	89	-	-	309	591
Class II	36	158	8,584	6,859	8,313	-	10	-	995	1,168	25	2	26,114	3,012	-	-	35	809
Class III	57	2,714	27,098	55,161	32,285	-	-	-	4,620	1,018	220	-	123,116	23,135	-	-	4,998	3,502
Class IV	10	945	30,812	22,285	14,498	-	-	-	1,484	-	-	-	70,024	15,840	-	-	8,095	6,643
Classes VII and VIII 4/	3	5,465	69,852	48,884	31,503	-	-	-	3,021	-	-	-	158,725	62	5,356	-	38,879	26,046
Total Class I and larger mills	302	9,455	148,040	139,976	98,818	10	143	2	10,944	4,627	1,000	2	413,017	42,323	5,356	-	52,389	37,855
Class 0	103	4	750	194	866	4	-	-	102	437	12	35	2,404	39	5	-	107	119
Total all classes	405	9,459	148,790	140,170	99,684	14	143	2	11,046	5,064	1,012	37	415,421	42,362	5,361	-	52,496	37,974
Shingle mills	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,942	-	-
Total all active mills	409	9,459	148,790	140,170	99,684	14	143	2	11,046	5,064	1,012	37	415,421	42,362	5,361	1,942	52,496	37,974
(Mills reported idle - 115)																		
NORTHEASTERN WASHINGTON (Ferry, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Stevens Counties)																		
Class I-a	29	25	1,001	935	1,000	8	95	20	-	-	3	-	3,087	126	-	-	24	25
Class I-b	18	10	2,558	1,857	1,663	4	-	-	20	-	-	-	6,112	600	-	-	65	182
Class II	12	158	2,854	1,508	3,228	23	2	5	16	-	-	-	7,794	-	-	-	235	229
Class III	17	2,358	19,533	7,262	11,679	553	153	350	68	-	-	-	41,956	630	-	-	1,620	2,764
Classes IV-VII (combined) 4/	6	16,220	63,572	14,861	19,377	4,454	1,120	1,506	626	-	344	-	122,680	-	-	-	38,963	27,581
Total Class I and larger mills	82	19,371	89,518	26,423	36,947	5,042	1,370	1,881	730	-	347	-	181,629	1,356	-	-	41,107	30,701
Class 0	13	-	99	64	78	-	-	-	23	-	-	-	264	34	-	175	-	11
Total all classes	95	19,371	89,617	26,487	37,025	5,042	1,370	1,881	753	-	347	-	181,893	1,390	-	175	41,107	30,792
Shingle mills	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,706	-	-
Total all active mills	96	19,371	89,617	26,487	37,025	5,042	1,370	1,881	753	-	347	-	181,893	1,390	-	1,881	41,107	30,792
(Mills reported idle - 21)																		
NORTH IDAHO																		
Class I-a	61	245	2,175	1,156	2,438	558	32	88	21	20	10	-	6,743	206	-	-	42	404
Class I-b	35	199	3,706	1,687	2,367	841	637	150	102	13	14	-	9,716	204	-	5,038	585	139
Class II	16	765	4,656	1,814	2,526	1,079	966	65	121	-	-	-	11,992	425	-	-	175	210
Class III	48	16,814	30,378	20,619	25,725	8,831	1,902	2,711	2,255	17	102	1	109,355	-	-	-	5,487	11,929
Class IV	11	22,668	18,870	8,737	15,886	6,122	805	203	2,535	-	-	-	75,766	-	467	-	10,782	16,937
Classes V-VIII (combined) 4/	10	173,432	67,292	36,424	55,025	67,192	14,943	562	712	-	257	-	415,839	207	16,532	-	118,460	102,748
Total Class I and larger mills	181	214,123	127,077	70,437	103,907	84,623	19,285	3,779	5,746	50	383	1	629,411	1,042	16,999	5,038	135,531	132,367
Class 0	27	7	168	149	227	24	8	1	1	16	-	-	601	-	-	-	61	66
Total all classes	208	214,130	127,245	70,586	104,134	84,647	19,293	3,780	5,747	66	383	1	630,012	1,042	16,999	5,038	135,592	132,433
Shingle mills	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37,811	-	-
Total all active mills	220	214,130	127,245	70,586	104,134	84,647	19,293	3,780	5,747	66	383	1	630,012	1,042	16,999	42,849	135,592	132,433
(Mills reported idle - 32)																		
SOUTH IDAHO																		
Class I-a	48	-	940	-	2,432	191	-	-	162	931	60	-	4,716	-	-	-	135	16
Class I-b	29	-	3,323	-	4,103	383	-	-	604	964	102	-	9,479	268	-	-	79	103
Class II	11	-	4,890	-	2,164	70	-	-	40	240	10	-	7,414	-	-	-	93	100
Class III	19	-	31,854	200	6,246	400	-	-	1,753	1,103	-	200	41,756	9	-	-	513	121
Classes IV-VIII (combined) 4/	9	-	141,693	500	25,792	766	-	-	859	-	-	-	169,610	10,127	-	-	37,149	43,307
Total Class I and larger mills	116	-	182,700	700	40,737	1,810	-	-	3,418	3,238	172	200	232,975	10,404	-	-	37,969	43,647
Class 0	38	-	219	14	417	40	-	-	30	236	17	4	977	-	-	-	15	45
Total all classes	154	-	182,919	714	41,154	1,850	-	-	3,448	3,474	189	204	233,952	10,404	-	-	37,984	43,692
Shingle mills	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total all active mills	154	-	182,919	714	41,154	1,850	-	-	3,448	3,474	189	204	233,952	10,404	-	-	37,984	43,692
(Mills reported idle - 31)																		
ENTIRE STATE OF IDAHO																		
Class I-a	109	245	3,115	1,156	4,870	749	32	88	183	951	70	-	11,459	206	-	-	177	420
Class I-b	64	199	7,029	1,687	6,470	1,224	637	150	706	977	116	-	19,195	472	-	5,038	664	242
Class II	27	765	9,546	1,814	4,690	1,149	966	65	161	240	10	-	19,406	425	-	-	268	310
Class III	67	16,814	62,232	20,819	31,971	9,231	1,902	2,711	4,008	1,120	102	201	151,111	9	-	-	6,000	12,050
Class IV	15	22,668	37,983	8,737	19,112	6,162	805	203	2,635	-	-	-	98,305	-	467	-	10,802	18,573
Classes V-VIII (combined) 4/	15	173,432	189,872	36,924	77,531	67,918	14,943	562	1,471	-	257	-	562,910	10,334	16,532	-	155,589	144,419
Total Class I and larger mills	297	214,123	309,777	71,137	144,644	86,433	19,285	3,779	9,164	3,288	555	201	862,386	11,446	16,999	5,038	173,500	176,014
Class 0	65	7	387	163	644	64	8	1	31	252	17	4	1,578	-	-	-	76	111
Total all classes	362	214,130	310,164	71,300	145,288	86,497	19,293	3,780	9,195	3,540	572	205	863,964	11,446	16,999	5,038	173,576	176,125
Shingle mills	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37,811	-	-
Total all active mills	374	214,130	310,164	71,300	145,288	86,497	19,293	3,780	9,195	3,540	572	205	863,964	11,446	16,999	42,849	173,576	176,125
(Mills reported idle - 63)																		
SUMMARY FOR REGION ONE (Montana, Northeastern Washington and North Idaho)																		
GRAND TOTAL of all active mills	725	242,960	365,652	237,243	240,843	89,703	20,806	5,663	17,546	5,130	1,742	38	1,227,326	44,794	22,360	46,672	229,195	201,199
GRAND TOTAL of mills reported idle	168																	

1/ Classes are based on the following: Class 0, Less than 50 M; I-a, 50-199 M; I-b, 200-499 M; II, 500-999 M; III, 1,000-4,999 M; IV, 5,000-9,999 M; V, 10,000-14,999 M; VI, 15,000-24,999 M; VII, 25,000-49,999 M; VIII, 50,000 M and over.
2/ Includes birch, limber pine, alpine fir, locust, and poplar.
3/ Represents quantity of sawed ties, nine feet or less in length; included under "Total cut".
4/ Where classes are grouped this has been done to avoid disclosing operations of individual mills.

TABLE II

LUMBER PRODUCTION - 1946

NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

(Compiled by the Northern Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, Missoula, Montana, in cooperation with the Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce. The statistics presented in this summary are preliminary tabulations of complete returns. Final data will be issued by the Bureau of the Census.)

Species	Montana			North Idaho 1/			Northeastern Washington 2/			Northern Rocky Mountain Region		
	1945	1946	Change 1946 from 1945	1945	1946	Change 1946 from 1945	1945	1946	Change 1946 from 1945	1945	1946	Change 1946 from 1945
	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	Percent	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	Percent	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	Percent	M Ft.b.m.	M Ft.b.m.	Percent
Western white pine	3,815	9,459	+148	220,321	214,130	-3	14,327	19,371	+35	238,463	242,960	+2
Ponderosa pine	144,346	148,790	+3	125,422	127,245	+1	69,315	89,617	+29	339,083	365,652	+8
Douglas-fir	67,532	99,684	+48	110,732	104,134	-6	30,131	37,025	+23	208,395	240,843	+16
Western larch	110,092	140,170	+27	46,982	70,586	+50	20,305	26,487	+30	177,379	237,243	+34
Grand fir	425	14	-97	84,621	84,647	0	3,144	5,042	+60	88,190	89,703	+2
Engelmann spruce	13,824	11,046	-20	6,341	5,747	-9	1,077	753	-30	21,242	17,546	-17
Western redcedar	-	143	3/	15,485	19,293	+25	1,970	1,370	-30	17,455	20,806	+19
Western hemlock	-	2	3/	1,105	3,780	+242	1,030	1,881	+83	2,135	5,663	+165
Lodgepole pine	1,589	5,064	+219	176	66	-63	1	-	3/	1,766	5,130	+190
Cottonwood	126	1,012	+703	10	383	3/	177	347	+96	313	1,742	+457
Birch	-	2	3/	3	1	3/	-	-	-	3	3	3/
Limber pine	-	35	3/	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	3/
Total	341,749	415,421	+22	611,198	630,012	+3	141,477	181,893	+29	1,094,424	1,227,326	+12
Sawed ties (M Ft.b.m.) 4/	54,694	42,362	-23	4,699	1,042	-78	1,278	1,390	+9	60,671	44,794	-26
Lath (M pieces)	2,680	5,361	+100	17,192	16,999	-1	1,535	-	-100	21,407	22,360	+4
Shingles (squares)	1,024	1,942	+90	24,522	42,849	+75	40	1,881	3/	25,586	46,672	+82
Lumber on hand Dec. 31	52,496	37,974	-28	135,592	132,433	-2	41,107	30,792	-25	229,195	201,199	-12
Number of active:												
Sawmills	253	405	+60	131	208	+59	60	95	+58	444	708	+59
Shingle mills	2	4	+100	9	12	+33	-	1	-	11	17	+55
Total active mills	255	409	+60	140	220	+57	60	96	+60	455	725	+59
Number of idle mills	129	115	-11	42	32	-24	35	21	-40	206	168	-18
Total number of mills	384	524	+36	182	252	+38	95	117	+23	661	893	+35

1/ Includes that part of Idaho north of the Salmon River.
2/ Includes Stevens, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Ferry Counties.
3/ Comparative production statistics for these species not significant because of irregular occurrence in operating schedules.
4/ Represents quantity of sawed cross ties, nine feet or less in length; included in species totals.